

The Reporter

*The Delta Kappa
Gamma Society
International*

*Epsilon Kappa
Chapter #130*

*Alpha State
Austin, TX
Area 7*

*Editor
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International Mission: Delta Kappa Gamma promotes professional and personal growth of women educators and excellence in education

International Theme: DKG: Leading Women Educators, Impacting Education Worldwide

State Theme: You are the key

Chapter Theme: Women Educators and Learners... inspire, create and empower

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APRIL—JULY 2021

President's Message

School administrators are starting to look at enrollment for the 2021-2022 school year, meeting with teachers to discuss next year positions and looking over budgets. Everything is moving forward to plan for a much expected "normal" school year. But, are our teachers ready?

This year we were forced to adapt to an entirely new teaching approach. We followed COVID guidelines and protocols to keep students and staff safe, while still delivering quality instruction. This made us look at instructional practices with a different lens and opened our eyes to other alternatives to meet our goals. That wasn't a comfortable ride. Let's not forget that teachers are creatures of habit; therefore, having a constantly changing scenario drained them a lot, but still we helped kids close the gap from the Spring/Summer slide! We never dropped the towel; we provided rich and fun learning opportunities, always putting the students' needs first. But I want you to stop for a second and think: What have you done to take care of yourself?

If you are like me, you already have a list of summer learning

opportunities, have an ongoing list for next year goals, and all this is great, but what about you?

We need to pause and also plan "me time" -- an opportunity to look at our health both physically and mentally. What are things you like to do that you haven't done lately? I'm going to challenge you to dedicate days this summer to take care of you, mani/pedi, lunch with your friends, a day to sit by the pool and read. Choose your go-to calm routine and follow through; you've earned it!

Taking care of yourself should come easy. But sometimes it's so easy to forget! So, time to rest and recharge is an absolute necessity if you want to have better focus and mental clarity. You will feel so energized. Imagine what amazing ideas you will have for the upcoming school year once you have set some time aside for you.

I'll finish with this quote: "Self-care is giving the world the best of you, instead of what's left of you"—Katie Reed.

—Hilda Diaz





February Meeting Highlights

Our February 11th Zoom meeting featured a presentation by Michelle Brooks, a Third Grade Teacher at Village Elementary in Georgetown. She first discussed how the book *The 5 Love Languages of Children* by Gary Chapman and Ross Campbell has been used throughout the school to build relationships among the adults and students. With clear expectations and individuals' awareness of their own behavior, the learning environment is stronger. There are five needs that we all have and when we discover what a student needs, the teacher can show genuine care to better support each child. The first point is *physical touch* that can be as simple as a high five or a pat on the back. *Words*, such as, "you are special," and "you did a great job," are reassuring for some children. Of course many students like a small *gift*; those stickers we give out are important! Service might involve doing something for the child like an action that helps him or her feel more important within the classroom. When a teacher can share *quality time* with a student, that undivided attention is what a child may need most. Michelle also talked about Enneagrams, nine personality characters, that shows a person's dominant strength. These are: 1) Moral Perfectionist, 2) Supportive Advisor, 3) Successful Achiever, 4) Romantic Individualist, 5) Investigative Thinker, 6) Loyal Guardian, 7) Entertaining Optimist, 8) Protective Challenger, 9) Peaceful Mediator. These nine points are arranged in a circle and then lines of connection from the dominant characteristic to four other types help us see a more complex and complete picture of our roles and who we can seek out to balance our perspectives. The meeting was a positive exploration of how to support our students and strengthen our own self awareness.

—Bernadine Eaton

March Meeting Highlights

Mandy Partida, STEM Coordinator for K-5 in Georgetown ISD, was the presenter for our March Zoom meeting. We had the opportunity to experience the *Number Sense* training that Mandy prepares for classroom teachers in her district. Number groupings and patterns were used to help facilitate our different learning styles. We shared how and why we saw the patterns and groupings and the logic we used to determine the answers to Mandy's prompts. She discussed the importance of students turning to one another to talk about the math problems and helping one another in discovery learning. Mandy is also the Teacher Certification Coordinator at Southwestern University in Georgetown, Texas.



—Kathy Mihalik

YOU are the key Good News on S.E.E. campuses

During the first week of April, our twenty-one mentees will receive a surprise in their school mailboxes. Marcia and Bernadine will deliver small packets containing a health bar plus several candy favorites to our four main schools. The office staff at Walnut Creek, Guerrero-Thompson, Cook, and Wooldridge will assist us in this special mission. Our Epsilon Kappa label lets those educators know that we still care about them.

Outstanding First Year Teacher

Congratulations to Lindsey Koceja. She is a third grade Dual Language Teacher at Berkman Elementary in the Round Rock ISD. Her principal said that Lindsey is a true gift to her students and the teaching profession! She has a natural ability to connect to her students, make learning meaningful and relevant, and has implemented strategies in her classroom to ensure ALL learners are successful.

Events, Publications and News!



92nd Annual TSO Convention

June 16 - 19, 2021

Denton Convention Center, Denton, Texas

The 92nd TSO Convention will be held at the Denton Convention Center. The hotel is ready to take your reservations for the TSO Denton Convention June 17-19, 2021. Call 844-684-9427, use the group code DKG, or go online at the link on the convention website to make your reservation. For the registration form, schedules and speakers log on to <https://dkgtxas2021convention.weebly.com/>

Important Dates

May 1, 2021—Founders Day Luncheon (**CANCELLED**)

June 16 - 19, 2021—Denton Convention Center, Denton, Texas

July 7 - 10, 2021—The International Conference in Portland

July 22 - 24, 2021—The International Conference in San Antonio **An opportunity for members to get a "taste" of an international conference and use the Richards Grant for registration and travel!**

Phyllis Richards 2021 Grant Opportunity

As a member of Epsilon Kappa Chapter, each of us is also a member of the **Epsilon Kappa Educational Foundation**. Thanks to the generosity of long-time chapter member Dr. Phyllis Richards, the Foundation provides modest grants for chapter members to attend DKG leadership events. Several events are planned this summer for which members may receive grant funding.

The **TSO Convention** will be held at the Embassy Suites/Denton Convention Center in Denton, Texas, on June 16-19. State conventions include general meetings, breakout sessions, festive meal events, outstanding keynote speakers, and many opportunities for fellowship and networking. This year's convention events will end with brunch on Saturday to enable participants to return home for Fathers Day on Sunday. Consult the Spring 2021 *Lone Star News* and/or the dkgtxas.org website for more information about registration, hotel reservations, and convention schedule.

DKG is also offering two **international conferences** this summer. The first conference will be held in Portland, Oregon, July 7-10. The second conference will take place on July 22-24 in San Antonio. Members and their guests are welcome to attend one or both conferences. Information about the conferences may be found on the DKG website (www.dkg.org) and in the Mar/Apr issue of the *DKG NEWS* (posted online). There you will find program descriptions, schedules, and spotlights on speakers for each conference.

If you are planning to attend any one of these events, you may be able to receive a Richards grant to assist with your expenses. Please review the guidelines and an interactive application form for a 2021 grant. Both documents are posted on the Epsilon Kappa chapter website (www.epsilonkappatx.com). To apply for a grant, complete the application form and submit it to ekedfound@aol.com.

Applications must be submitted by April 15, 2021.

Member Spotlight



New member
Faith Unger

Faith Unger

I began my first teaching job in September 1971, teaching a self-contained classroom of 30 sixth graders. It was not for the faint of heart! I may have taught them subject matter, but they taught me about life. Most of them were from large families and had lots of life experience. I was experiencing my first pregnancy that year, and they would often give me advice on that journey! Many of them had skills and hobbies that were unique to me—quilting, wood carving, and needle work are some that I remember. I organized a crafts fair for them to show off their work in the school community. At Christmas time we chopped down our own Christmas tree and made ornaments together, incorporating the subject learning into those activities. I taught there another year, and then we moved to a different community and I took time off to raise children.

Many years later I returned to teaching in Jarrell, Texas. It was again a self-contained classroom of sixth graders. I traded my science for social studies classes, thus teaching both fifth grade and sixth grade social studies. I also taught music class. I had two of my best teaching years there, receiving great support from the school administration, parents, and fellow teachers. Most of my students had not been outside of their small geographical area, so I promoted a field trip to see Canyon of the Eagles and ride the boat out to see eagles. What a rich experience for all of us. These excursions became good fodder for our classroom lessons.

I taught four years in Palacios, Texas. It was a fifth grade team teaching opportunity at which I taught math, science, and social studies. Palacios at that time was one of the wealthiest school districts in Texas, quite the opposite of Jarrell! The University of Houston extension campus in Victoria offered opportunities for extending our classroom teaching by working with faculty and students on special learning projects. One I thoroughly enjoyed was that of using fun games to teach math. Palacios had a marine learning center where classroom learning could be augmented with experiences on the water front and adjoining lab.

I finished my Master's degree and certification in teaching the Gifted and Talented. Round Rock school district offered me a position teaching Language Arts and Math to elementary students identified as gifted. After a couple of years, I transferred to a different campus, still teaching the gifted and talented, but now just language arts, which is my favorite subject to teach. It was during this time that I had an article published, and together the students and I did Writing Workshop. There were so many opportunities to blend writing, reading, and social studies together, often using a historical event to link the work together. Because students were usually with me for several years we became like family and sometimes my reading choices were based on specific needs of the children. When a student's parent was experiencing end of life, we read *Bridge to Terrabithia*. When we all needed to appreciate diversity, we read *Sign of the Beaver*. For our spelling work, we learned vocabulary by parsing out the words, looking for common roots, suffixes, and prefixes. Many years after they had left my teaching realm, I received an invitation to lunch with a group of elementary school alumni heading off to college. They wanted me to know how valuable the vocabulary work was to successful SAT scores!

After retiring from teaching, I worked for a local non-profit recruiting and coordinating volunteers for seven years. Next, I went to work for AGE of Central Texas to develop a new program there, CaregiverU. The vision was to form a collaboration of Partner Agencies, each with its own instructors. CaregiverU would then prepare these instructors to teach evidence based courses to older adults and family caregivers.

Epsilon Kappa Chapter Dues

It's that time again --- collection of Epsilon Kappa chapter dues....still \$90!

Please always feel free to add a tax-deductible donation to our Epsilon Kappa foundation.

Each member can choose one of three methods to send the money to Marcia Kirkland:

- 1) Mail a check made out to Epsilon Kappa directly to Marcia Kirkland along with the dues form.
- 2) Use PayPal by the following method:

Make sure to choose correct option -- Send money to a friend

ebarron106@aol.com

- 3) A new method....using Venmo -- you can find me if you would like to pay using your venmo app by using:

Username: Marcia-Kirkland-2

E-mail: fhollandhaven@aol.com

Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns about paying your dues at this time.



EPSILON KAPPA CHAPTER DUES AND CONTRIBUTIONS

2021 - 2022

home
 cell

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Email _____

ACTIVE MEMBER DUES: \$ _____ 90

VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS:

EPSILON KAPPA EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION (tax deductible)
 Each member contributing at least \$50 will be recognized as a **Sustaining Donor**.

Phyllis Richards Endowed Leadership Fund \$ _____

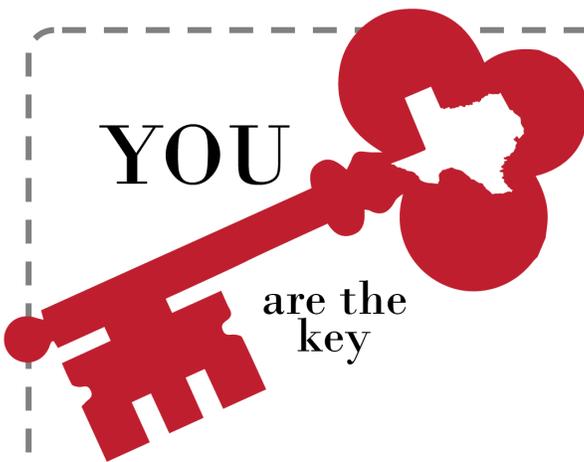
Chapter Foundation Projects / SEE Project \$ _____

Make check payable to EPSILON KAPPA. Grand Total \$ _____

Mail by **May 28** to Marcia Kirkland, 12314 W. Cow Path, Austin, TX 78727 (phone 512.250.2026)

→ Contribution forms for state and international funds may be found in the **Forms** section of the respective websites (www.dkgtexas.org and www.dkg.org).

Photo Release: By submitting your membership dues and by your attendance at chapter meetings and events, you are granting permission to be filmed, videotaped, audio-taped, or photographed by any means at such meetings and events and are granting full use of your likeness, voice, and words, including publication on the world wide web (www) with access through the internet, without compensation.



Newsletter Information

Please submit your articles and highlights for our next Chapter newsletter on or before Friday, July 16th. You can send your submissions by email to Kathy Mihalik at kmihalik@airmail.net.

During this year, members may be asked to submit articles about their reflections of meetings or other DKG activities. We want to involve as many people as possible to highlight the diversity of our chapter. Also, let us know about your Life Milestones, whether you have attended a meeting or not. News is always appreciated.

Please contact Marcia Kirkland if you wish to receive a printed copy of the newsletter, though we are trying to “go green” and send most by e-mail. Thanks, Marcia, for your help with communications!

**Epsilon Kappa Chapter
The Delta Kappa Gamma
Society International**

Chapter Website: <https://www.epsilonkappatx.com>

Looking for New Members

As a new school year begins, Epsilon Kappa wishes to invite new members to our chapter. We hope to identify potential new members, invite them to an orientation session, and induct them into membership at future meetings. Please let Bernadine Eaton, Membership Committee chair, know about any potential members. It is always nice to have several new members, since that makes it more fun for them. ANYONE can invite a new member, so look around at school, church, community and tell women educators about DKG!!

Let's Celebrate!



April...

- 13Cindy Gruner
- 14Margie Kincer
- 21Aggie Curry-Jones
- 26Norma Jost
- 27Marcia Kirkland

June...

- 6Melissa Saldana
- 6Judy Wallace
- 10Linda Holt
- 13Charlotte Brown
- 24Kathy Dixon
- 24Kim Thonhoff
- 30Cara Hamlin

May...

- 7 Leila Dumas
- 20 Debra Aceves
- 26 Glenda Ballard
- 26 Iliana Barrera-Lubman
- 27 Elizabeth Newell
- 27 Sherri Greenberg

July...

- 1 Yvette Cardenas
- 6 Earin Martin
- 13 Mary Ortiz Boland
- 15 Carmen Ferrer-McCluskey
- 16 Marion Coffee Carney
- 19 Diane Sidoroff